"WHERE ARE OUR PROVINCIAL THEATRES?"

by

Russell Patterson
Musical Director of the Kansas City Lyric Theatre

Imagine, if you will, a major league baseball team with no "farm system" or contact with smaller clubs from which to draw its future stars. Such an organization would be forced to "take a chance" on young, unproved talent, taken directly from school and amateur sources. The small percentage of "Bonus Babies" who have been able to attain stardom while competing with established veterans is proof enough of the necessity for a star system of farm clubs (on a professional level) to help in the "seasoning" of these potentially great players.

Yet, operatically speaking, we have no such network of professional theaters in which to "season" the future Metropolitan artists. As a result of the Regional Auditions of the National Council of the Metropolitan Opera Association, a few of our younger artists (in baseball terms "Bonus Babies") are given a chance to be heard. This is wonderful so far as it goes, but this still leaves us with a large (and largely untapped) number of singers who leave the universities and conservatories and have nowhere to go professionally. All they have to hope for is that some day they will be heard.

Where they will be heard is the question facing us. The major European houses such as La Scala, Rome, Vienna, etc., can draw experienced artists from a great number of smaller theaters. In Germany, for example, a young singer has the opportunity of starring in one of the numerous provincial theaters and progressing through such cities as Frankfurt, Nuremberg, or Cologne until he reaches the Bayrische Staatsoper or the Vienna State Opera. In contrast to this method of development, the younger American artist is expected to step from the college workshop directly on to the stage of a great house and be able to hold his own with established veterans who have had the advantage of growing into their...
roles through a gradual process. Our universities and schools of music are turning out more young singers every year, many of them with great potential. They are, however, still several years away from reaching vocal maturity and it is during this period of their careers when they should be acquiring the knowledge and experience so necessary for working under professional conditions.

In the past, it has been necessary for an American artist to travel abroad in order to gain virtually any experience beyond that of the college workshop or amateur production. While the standard of these productions in many cases is a very high one, they cannot fill the need our country has for small opera-producing organizations which can give young singers the chance to do more than "walk-on" roles and, at the same time, earn enough compensation to enable them to continue their studies. Since the close of World War II, our younger artists have been virtually flooding the European musical scene. Now, however, a saturation point is being reached abroad as a large number of young German and Italian artists are rising to prominence. How long can we depend on the European houses to give our singers positions over their own young artists? How long can we continue to ignore the needs of our own young singers and still expect to have a country which can take pride in its cultural climate? Outside of a few major cities which have opera companies whose seasons are at least several weeks in length, the best that we can boast of is isolated "festival" performances in which local singers are fortunate to be able to walk the boards with imported artists of international fame. Certainly we have cities like New York, Chicago, and San Francisco which can rank with the major houses of the world (at least in the glamour of rosters if not in the length of season). But let us say, for the sake of comparison, that these three companies are our equivalent of La Scala, Vienna, and Paris. Where are our fifty second line houses? And where are the one hundred small theaters in which our future stars are to start?

Unless we can establish repertory companies on a professional level with at least a reasonably long season, I am afraid that we will find ourselves with a situation in the future quite similar to that of our major leagues in baseball - one of trying to expand our number of teams without the calibre of players to fill the rosters!

The following is the first of a series of short articles submitted by Ken C. Baumann of the Ithaca Civic Opera Group, based on his vast experience in the field of music:

"FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A STATE DIRECTOR - PAGE 1"

During the preparations for a new production it is always one of the most important difficult tasks to establish a solid working contact with the conductor of the production. The ideal beginning for me always is a complete playing through of the score by the conductor on the piano while I sit and listen to him with my own working score, mentally or physically noting major characteristics of the conductor's image of it.

The next step is to absorb the musical score so completely in accordance with the conductor's image of it that, if called upon - and technically capable - you could conduct it yourself.

Any dangerous point of possible conflict with the conductor has to be diplomatically circumvented. For example, if the production is DON GIOVANNI, how will you get the conductor's consent to play a 17th century work with 18th century music as if both text and music were from the same century? The solution is, the better your historical background (Spanish Golden Age, Bertati, Da Ponte, etc.), the better will be your standing with the conductor and the affect of your reasoning.

...to be continued.
NEWS IN BRIEF

Multi Projection System
This is an entirely new concept in theatrical scenery developed by Dr. Elemer Nagy of the Hartt School of Music in conjunction with Boris Goldovsky of the New England Opera Theatre. It is a twin unit of screens and telescopic aluminum tubes, and entirely replaces physical scenery. Successful try-outs have been undertaken in both Chicago and New York, and demonstrations will take place in Hartford on February 23, 24, and 25. The system is available for either purchase or rental, and full particulars may be obtained by writing to Dr. Nagy at 21 Beverly Road, West Hartford, Conn.

Competitions—Auditions
$11,500 in prizes for student composers under 26 living in this hemisphere. Write: Russell Sanjek, Director SCA Project, Broadcast Music Inc., 589 Fifth Avenue, N.Y.

Eastern Regional Auditions, New York, January 24, 31; February 14, 21; March 7, 14, 1961. Write: Regional Auditions of the National Council of the Metropolitan Opera, 147 W. 39th Street, New York 18, N.Y. Prizes include a Metropolitan Opera contract and scholarships. Open to sopranos 19 to 30 years of age, mezzos and contraltos 19 to 32, tenors 20 to 32, baritones 20 to 33, and basses 20 to 35.

National Federation of Music Clubs: Singers 23 to 35 years of age. Prizes: $1,000 or Town Hall recital. Write: Rooney Coffer, 205 W. 57th St., New York 19.

American Opera Auditions, 4511 Carew Tower, Cincinnati 2, Ohio. Open to singers between 21 and 34. Preliminary auditions in New York and other cities in April. Winners to debut in Milan with expenses paid.


Kay Grifel of Eldorado, Iowa, won the $1,000 Singer of the Year prize sponsored by the National Association of Teachers of Singing.

International Competition for Young Opera Singers, Sofia, Bulgaria. For singers of both sexes, all nationalities, 23 to 33 years of age. Deadline: March 31, 1961. Competition taking place in Sofia from June 26 to July 10, 1961. Requirements presuppose previous experience on stage and other public performances. Applications should include brief biographical data, copy of birth certificate, photograph. Expenses throughout duration of competition are borne by organization committee.

TESTS: First eliminatory - a. an aria, b. a song (both chosen by competitor)

Second eliminatory - a. an aria from 17th and 18th century works.
 b. an aria from 19th and 20th century works.
 (chosen by competitor but not performed at first test mentioned above)

Final - limited to 12 competitors to sing the principal part in a performance of the Sofia National Opera in one of the following: CARMEN, OTHELLO, LA TRAVIATA, AIDA, IL TROVATORE, DON CARLO, RIGOLETTO, THE QUEEN OF SPADES, EUGENE ONEGIN, BORIS GODUNOV, LA BOHEME, MADAMA BUTTERFLY, TURANDOT, THE BARBER OF SEVILLE, LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, IVAN SUSANIN (A LIFE OF THE CZAR), MANON (Massenet), PAGLIACCI, THE MAGIC FLUTE, THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, PRINCE IGOR, FAUST (Gounod), WAR AND PEACE (Prokofiev).

Prizes: 20,000 leva and a gold medal (Leva are worth about 15c) (two prizes)
15,000 leva and a silver medal (two prizes)
10,000 leva and a silver medal (2 prizes)
(Those admitted to the final test but not awarded a prize will be
given diplomas with cash prizes of 2,000 leva)

Should the Laureates wish it, appearances can be made in various operas, concerts, etc.)

Write: The secretariat of the International Competition for Young Singers,
18 Blvd. Stamboliiski, Sofia, Bulgaria

Canadian Women's Club Annual Scholarship Award: $300-$500 - to further voice training in
New York City. Canadian-born, male or female singers already studying in New
York are eligible. Deadline: usually Feb. 15 for audition competition. Write:
Mary Bothwell, President, Canadian Women's Club, Savoy Hilton Hotel, 5th Ave & 59, N.Y.

Adelphi College held auditions for their spring production of the Adelphi College Opera
Workshop on January 30 and February 1, 1961. For further information on future auditions
write: Mr. Lawrence Rasmussen, Chairman, Music Dept., Adelphi College, Garden City, L.I.

Texaco-Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts
Through the generosity of Texaco, the Saturday broadcasts of the Metropolitan Opera have
brought 20 years of listening pleasure to opera lovers throughout the United States and
Canada. As a result of the formation of the new Texaco-Metropolitan special network,
more than 110 stations now broadcast these programs "live". Since we all have a great
responsibility in helping to continue these broadcasts, we ask your wholehearted and
immediate cooperation in helping to stimulate active support for them in your area. We
also urge that you encourage others to join you in writing to the manager of the radio
station on which you hear the broadcasts, thanking him for his contribution to the cul-
tural life of your community. We feel confident that, with your help, we can all look
forward to many years of Metropolitan Opera broadcasts.

Correction
Oglebay Institute informs us that their 1961 Workshop dates - mentioned in our January
1961 BULLETIN - have been changed to August 21 through September 4, 1961. Fees also have
been revised, and full details may be obtained by writing to: Mr. Thomas G. Slokan,
Director Promotion and Communications, Oglebay Institute, Oglebay Park, Wheeling, W. Va.

New Articles
James Browning, the National Council Staff Administrator, has contributed the following
four articles of interest to C.O.S. members:

1. January 1961 - MUSIC JOURNAL - "CAMPAIGNING FOR LOCAL OPERA"
3. January 11, 1961 edition of Metropolitan Opera PROGRAM - "(OPERA) INFORMATION PLEASE"
Potentiality of New Residents

How do you track down new residents in your community who are potential ticket purchasers, contributors, committee workers, performers, etc.? And what becomes of your patrons, ticket holders, committee workers, and performers who move away?

Why not report to the C.O.S. Office when someone who has been valuable to your organization moves to another city so that we can utilize their services in the new location. We urge you to publish regularly a short note about this new service in your opera programs, news sheets, etc., so that your people will volunteer the needed information.

University of Buffalo Opera Theatre

The current issue of the University of Buffalo Alumni Bulletin relates an interesting success story: from a modest start five years ago, the Music Department presented as its first production, Purcell's DIDO AND AENEAS. So successful was this production that an opera program was formed at the University. Since then, 15 different operas have been staged. Baird Hall was erected in 1956 and the Opera Theatre was given a place to function, albeit a small one. The "theatre" has a 240-seat student recital hall with a platform. With the addition of good lighting equipment and clever designing, operas can be successfully staged, and shop and storage facilities are provided in the basement. As there is no orchestra pit, the orchestra is placed in the balcony. A television camera is focused on the conductor and the cast sees his image in 3 TV sets located around the apron of the stage.

The 1960-61 season opened with TOSCA and played four nights to capacity audiences and then gave a fifth performance over WHEN-TV. The December opera, HANSEL AND GRETEL, as well as running four nights at Baird, played at nearby Amherst High School to accommodate 1200 children. The season will close March 23, 24, 25, and 26 with Leonard Bernstein's ON THE TOWN. Open auditions are held for all students and residents of Western New York for each production, and an opera workshop is offered through the University's Millard Fillmore College for anyone who wishes training in operatic skills.

Richard J. Marshall is assistant professor of music and director of the Choral and Opera Program. He came to the University in 1959 and, while pleased with the progress of the department thus far, he is now looking forward to the construction of the proposed fine arts center with a full scale opera theatre.

The Inwood Chamber Opera Players of 60 Thayer St., New York 40, informs us that they are available for "live" performances of complete operas and excerpts with full sets and costumes for special engagements in clubs, hospitals, schools, etc., for a very nominal fee. Some of the places they have performed are: The New School, The Inwood YMHA, Kingsbridge Veterans Hospital, Metropolitan Hospital, B'Nai B'rith Lodges and Chapters, and various women's clubs.

San Francisco Opera World Premiere

Under the terms of the new Ford Foundation program, the first of the possible 18 new operas to be presented over the next eight years will occur during the 1961 fall season. It is entitled "BLOOD MOON", the music and scenario by Norman Dello Joio and the libretto by Gale Hoffman. The opera was written under an arrangement with the Academy of Vocal Arts of Philadelphia where Mr. Dello Joio served as lecturer for one year.
San Francisco Opera Guild

The Guild announces that it is increasing its student performances to 4. Young people from all over northern California gather each year to attend these special "matinees" in October. Tickets are sold by the Guild only to organized groups from interested schools. Prices range from $1.20 to $3.00 instead of the regular $4.00 to $10.00. The difference is made up by the Opera Guild out of its membership dues. They urge schools interested to apply immediately to: Miss Betty Amati, San Francisco Opera Guild, War Memorial Opera House, San Francisco 2, California. Seat allocations will be made in the spring.

Last year, the Guild instituted "The Children's Opera Hours" aimed at the very young. They concentrate on the lighter operas, condensed versions of which are described by a narrator, the principal arias and ensembles being sung by the young artists from the "Guild's Talent Bank". Dr. Jan Popper was the narrator last year; this year it will be Miss Peggy Donovan, a new and most welcome member of C.O.S.

New Auditoriums

Further to the bibliography mentioned in the January 1961 BULLETIN, a feature article appears in the January 28 issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW entitled "New Design for New Theatres" by Leon Shiman.

Adelphi College announces the formation of the Adelphi College Opera Association, the first on Long Island, N.Y. It is a non-profit organization, and its purposes are to sponsor the performances of the Adelphi College Opera Workshop and serve as a beginning for bringing greater cultural opportunities to "growing" Long Island. Dues, which are tax deductible, are $5, $7.50, $25., $50., and $100. or more, entitling the members to varying privileges. Full details and brochures may be obtained by writing to: Adelphi College Opera Association, Adelphi College, Garden City, L.I., N.Y.

Theodore Presser Co. have just issued a new descriptive brochure on "Operas in English". For copies, please write: Mrs. Ellie Schmidt, Opera Dept., Theodore Presser, Bryn Mawr, Pa.

U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology

A two-day series of general sessions, panels and discussions on Theatre Architecture, presentation, and administration was held at the Juilliard School of Music on February 4 and 5, and was attended by 133 delegates. Mr. James Browning was elected to the first Board of Directors, and other members of the Executive Committee include Messrs. Thomas De Gaetani, President, Ben Schlanger, Vice-President, Joel Rubin, Technical Secretary, and John Cornell, Secretary-Treasurer. The organization is in the process of organizing a drive for members and information may be secured by writing to Secretary, United States Institute for Theatre Technology, Box 291, Cathedral Station, New York 25.

Inquiry

A member is interested in a work of reference that gives staging directions for the "traditional" or "standard" forms of opera, preferably with complete blocking, detailed dramatic action, and musical cues for action. If anyone knows of such reference works it would be greatly appreciated if they would advise us.
PRODUCTIONS BY C.O.S. MEMBERS

ARIZONA

Scottsdale Chamber Opera Company, Scottsdale (Joseph Esile, Exec. Dir. & Prod.)
October 1959 - R.S.V.P. or A MUSICAL AT MR. CAULIFLOWER'S (Offenbach)
   SLOW DUSK (Carlisle Floyd)
   ARCHY AND MEHITABEL (George Kleinsinger)
2/4,5,6/60 - LA SERVA PADRONA (Pergolesi)
   THE SCARF (Lee Hoiby)
   GALLANTRY (Moore-Arnold Sundgaard)
3/3,4,5/60 - SISTER ANGELICA (Puccini)
   THE IMPRESARIO (Mozart)
11/4,5/60 - AMELIA GOES TO THE BALL (Menotti)
   STILL DARK CLOUDS (Joseph Esile)
1/13,14/61 - THE MEDIUM (Menotti)
   THE TELEPHONE (Menotti)
5/13,14/61 - THE RUBY (Norman Dello Joio)
   SUNDAY EXCURSION (Alex Wilder)

ARKANSAS

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
The second Annual High School Invitational Opera Festival will take place
Mar. 3, 4, 1961, under the direction of Kenneth L. Ballenger. The judges
will be Leonard Treash, Director of the Opera Dept. at the Eastman School of
Music, and Mrs. Lee S. Steele, Music Writer for the Toledo (Ohio) BLADE. 7
schools with approximately 150 students from a three-state area will present
7 different operas:
Arkansas - Texarkana - Scene from THE MIKADO
Oklahoma - Tulsa, Edison High School - GALLANTRY
   Will Rogers H.S. - L'ENFANT PRODIGUE
   Central H.S. - SCENES FROM CAROUSEL
   Ponca City - THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES
Missouri - Springfield Central H.S. - COLLECTOR'S PIECE (McKee)
The University of Arkansas Opera Workshop will introduce a recent work of
Seymour Barab's, A GAME OF CHANCE.

INDIANA

University of Indiana, Bloomington (Dean Wilfred Bain)
2/4/61 - LA TRAVIATA
2/11,18,25/61 - GOLDEN COCKEREL
3/4,11/61 - PELLEAS AND MELISANDE
3/26/61 - PARSIFAL

MISSOURI

St. Louis Grand Opera Guild
2/21/61 - IL TABARRO (English) (Under direction of Dorothy Ziegler) with
district winners of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions and St. Louis Symphony.
Guild members were also invited to attend the National Council of the
Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions (Howard J. Hook, Jr., Chairman) on
February 11 at 10:30 a.m.
NEW YORK

Adelphi College, Garden City, Long Island, N.Y. (Lawrence Rasmussen)
2/12/61 - THE IMPRESARIO (English) - Benefit for the special projects of the Faculty Wives Club of Adelphi, including the new $1,000,000 Adelphi College Library.

Amato Opera Theatre, Inc. (Albert C. and Anthony Amato)
Write: Amato, 126 W. 23, N.Y. 11, CH. 3-0387, or Town Hall, 123 W. 43.

Community Opera (Gladys Mathew)
2/10/61 - COLLECTOR'S PIECE by Jeanellen McKee (N.Y. Premiere)
ILE by Beatrice Laufer (American Premiere) (Based on O'Neill's The Long Voyage Home; performed 10 times last year by the Royal Opera in Stockholm.
THE TELEPHONE by Menotti

2/11/61 - GALLANTKY by Douglas Moore
ILE by Laufer
COLLECTOR'S PIECE

2/12/61 - THE BARREN PINES by Ruth Bradley (World Premiere)
SUNDAY EXCURSION by Alec Wilder

Manhattan School of Music (John Brownlee)
3/1/61 - Concert at Hunter College of contemporary music:
PIANO CONCERTO by Villa-Lobos (Ellen Ballon soloist)
THREE SONNETS FROM SHAKESPEARE by Ludmila Ulehla (for soprano and orchestra.) World Premiere.
ENPRATA by Carl Orff
FERLA MAGICA by Carlos Surinach
ANTIPHONIE by Francois Morel
DECORATION DAY by Charles Ives

Inwood Chamber Opera Players (Susan Popper)
2/15/61 - THE COUNTRY PHILOSOPHER by Galuppi (New translation by Inwood group)

PENNSYLVANIA

Rittenhouse Opera Society, Philadelphia 2 (Marco Farnese)
11/15,16/61 - CAVALLETTA RUSTICANA AND IL TABARRO
1/17,18/61 - L'AMICO TRITZ by Mascagni
3/21,22,23/61 - LE VILLI by Puccini (Philadelphia Premiere)

TEXAS

Dallas Civic Opera Company Performance Report
1957 - BENEFIT CONCERT with Maria Callas
L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI
1958 - LA TRAVIATA
L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI
MEDUSA
1959 - LUCIA DI LAMMERMORE; IL BARBIERE DE SIVIGLIA; MEDEA
1960 (November) DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT; MADAMA BUTTERFLY; ALCINA;
DON GIOVANNI

*Mr. Anthony Amato has just learned that AROLDO was performed in New York on May 4, 1863, He therefore regrets that, even though this was almost 100 years ago, he can no longer claim this as an American premiere. He has been partly compensated by discovering that the reviews were wildly enthusiastic.*
TEXAS cont.

Fort Worth Opera Association (Rudolf Kruger)
10/26, 27/60 - LA BOHEME
11/13, 14/60 - A MASKED BALL
4/5, 7/61 - SAMSON AND DELILAH
(All productions in English)

VIRGINIA

Norfolk College of William and Mary (Prof. Harold G. Hawn)
11/12/60 - CHANTICLEER by Seymour Barab (Portsmouth)
2/24/61 - GALLANTRY by Douglas Moore (American Music Festival)
4/7/61 - GALLANTRY (State Convention, Portsmouth)
5/6/61 - SOUTH PACIFIC (Oceana Naval Air Station)
5/10/61 - SOUTH PACIFIC (Naval Base, Norfolk)
5/12, 13/61 - SOUTH PACIFIC (Center Theater, Norfolk)
5/20/61 - SOUTH PACIFIC (College of William and Mary, Williamsburg)

WASHINGTON

Opera Society of Washington (Eliss Hebert and Paul Callaway)
2/9, 10, 12/61 - IDOMENEO by Mozart - Washington Premiere

UPPER MIDWEST REGION

The following report on this Region's various productions was sent in by
the Membership Chairman, Mrs. Clarke Bassett:

IOWA

Cedar Rapids Symphony Orchestra (Mr. Henry Denecke)
PASQUALE
FAUST

University of Iowa, Iowa City (Mr. Herald Stack)
CARMEN, FAUST, BOY FRIEND, SCENES FROM SHORT OPERAS

MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota (Mr. Peter Knowles, Director)
IL TABARRO, SUNDAY EXCURSION, ANGELIQUE, LANTERN MARRIAGE,
INTRODUCTION - IL CAMPANELLO, THE BOOR

St. Scholastica College, Duluth
BEGGAR'S OPERA and RIDER TO THE SEA

NEBRASKA

University of Nebraska (Dr. Emanuel Wishnow)
SWEET OPERA AFFAIR

NORTH DAKOTA

University of North Dakota, Grand Forks
IL TABARRO and GALLANTRY